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Subject: USS Lead - Press

East Chicago press clips**US EPA Region 5 – prepared by the Office of Public Affairs****September 30, 2016****Courier Press, WTHR – Opinion - Howey: The Senate and East Chicago****Lakeshore Public Media - Lead Scams in East Chicago****NWI Times - East Chicago's Calumet residents to host neighborhood meeting****Weather.com - East Chicago, Indiana, Residents Outraged Over Flawed CDC Report That Put Children at Risk For Lead Poisoning****HufPo - ran Reuter's Thousands Of Indiana Residents Endangered By Misleading Lead Report**

<http://www.courierpress.com/story/opinion/columnists/2016/09/29/howey-senate-and-east-chicago/91275548/>

<http://www.wthr.com/article/the-us-senate-race-and-east-chicago>

Opinion**Howey: The Senate and East Chicago**

Brian Howey, howeypolitics.com 12:45 p.m. CDT September 29, 2016

INDIANAPOLIS – Evan Bayh has a problem.

The \$10 Million Man thought he could do an end around Hoosier voters, evade a primary election, grab a U.S. Senate nomination in July for a seat he refused to defend in 2010, then traipse back to Washington where he could sleep in his own bed every night. Instead, he is in a pure dog fight with Republican Todd Young, who has already knocked off two congressmen (former Rep. Mike Sodrel in the 2010 Republican primary, then Rep. Baron Hill that November).

This Senate race, which is already nearing the \$25 million mark in money, is playing out in perhaps the most unlikely place in the state: East Chicago. As Donald Trump might put it, Steeltown has become "Importantville."

The reason is that last May, the EPA informed about 1,100 residents in the West Calumet Housing Complex that they and their 700 children were living on land severely contaminated by lead and arsenic left behind by a now defunct USS Lead factory. It should have been no secret. The Associated Press reported that in 1985, the Indiana Department of Environmental Management found elevated lead levels in the soil and the Indiana Department of Health found high levels of lead in the blood of children. A 2008 EPA memo described the tract as "an imminent and substantial endangerment to the public health, welfare and the environment."

East Chicago Mayor Anthony Copeland was forced to make a fateful decision: Declare West Calumet uninhabitable. This, of course, sent a thousand Hoosiers scrambling. "It's mind-boggling. You have so many people who could have and should have done something," Democratic State Sen. Lonnie Randolph who's represented the city since 2008, told the AP. "The bottom line is somebody just didn't care."

Gov. Mike Pence is on his excellent vice presidential adventure and his administration has essentially checked out, though spokesman Matt Lloyd said the state has sent \$100,000 in for "health and housing." The governor hasn't bothered to come to East Chicago (though he has visited flood victims in Iowa and Louisiana and tornado victims in Kokomo), perhaps because this crisis collides with a key Pence talking point that industry is over regulated by the federal government. Months after the crisis surfaced, Pence did have a phone conversation with U.S. Housing and Urban Development Sec. Julián Castro, then sent him a letter asking questions on Sept. 20 about the HUD response.

This lack of priority had the mayor and senator reaching out to anyone who might help.

Enter Rep. Young, who sits on the influential House Ways & Means Committee. Earlier this week, he introduced legislation to address the affordable housing shortage in East Chicago by targeting additional low-income housing tax credits to the impacted area. "Entire lives are being uprooted by this disaster," said Young. "It is bad enough having families forced from their homes, but it is a tragedy to learn so many will end up leaving the community altogether in search of an affordable place to live."

Hundreds of children are implicated here, and as such, there is more we should be doing at all levels of government to find a workable solution. Whether it be to extended family, schools, churches, or neighbors, many of these families have deep ties to East Chicago. Making sure they have the ability to return to their community is an important prospect."

"Too many of the Hoosiers I represent from the West Calumet Housing Complex will be forced to leave the area because of a lack of affordable housing," said Sen. Randolph. "Congressman Young and I met earlier this month to discuss the federal government's response and I am pleased those conversations gave rise to this legislation. It will provide housing for so many displaced residents here in East Chicago, and I would strongly encourage the Indiana delegation to join Todd and support this important bill."

U.S. Rep. Pete Visclosky, D-Merrillville, told the Times he seeks to "work with all stakeholders."

And the Bayh campaign's response? Peter Luster, Bayh's political director, blasted Young's proposal as "politically expedient" and said it "reeks of cynicism and opportunism. Let's be clear: East Chicago is our Flint and Todd Young is exploiting people that need help to try and get ahead."

It was an odd response from a candidate who is basing his comeback on the notion of seeking bipartisan cooperation.

Lake County is Bayh Country and has been since the early 1960s when Birch Bayh was first elected to the Senate. With the Sept. 6-8 WTHR/Howey Politics Indiana Poll showing Bayh leading Young by just 44-40 percent, he will need a heavy turnout in Lake to offset Young's strength in places like the doughnut counties around Indianapolis. The poll captured this fascinating data point: Bayh was getting only 11 percent support among Republicans. Back in the days when he was winning landslide elections, Bayh's slice of the GOP vote was firmly in the 20th percentile.

So there's some irony that Democrats facing a huge problem in a city with a motto "Progredemur" ("We progress"), would find a willing partner in a Republican from Bloomington.

The columnist is publisher of Howey Politics Indiana at www.howeypolitics.com. Find him on Facebook and Twitter @hwypol.

<http://lakeshorepublicmedia.org/lead-scams-in-east-chicago/>

Lead Scams in East Chicago

September 28, 2016

By: Steven Lattimore, Lakeshore Public Radio

East Chicago – The discovery of elevated lead levels in East Chicago has many residents looking ways to rid themselves or their families of lead contamination. Experts are warning residents about snake oil salesmen who are offering quick fix remedies that don't work and can cost you money.

http://www.nwitimes.com/news/local/lake/east-chicago-s-calumet-residents-to-host-neighborhood-meeting/article_b4b1dc1e-cbec-5651-8c01-e615eb762439.html

East Chicago's Calumet residents to host neighborhood meeting

- Lauren Cross lauren.cross@nwi.com, (219)-933-3206

EAST CHICAGO — Residents living within the city's lead- and arsenic-contaminated Calumet neighborhood can learn more about available resources during a public meeting Saturday.

The meeting — hosted by Calumet residents incorporating as a nonprofit called We the People — will be from 2 to 4 p.m. Saturday at American Legion Allied Post 369, 1401 W. Chicago Ave., in East Chicago, according to a news release from the group.

Residents can find out how to get involved in the group's efforts to form a Community Advisory Group, which will ultimately include representatives from all cleanup zones of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Superfund site, according to the release.

<https://weather.com/science/environment/news/west-calumet-indiana-east-chicago-cdc-epa-lead>

East Chicago, Indiana, Residents Outraged Over Flawed CDC Report That Put Children at Risk For Lead Poisoning

Published: Sep 29 2016 11:15 AM EDT

By Pam Wright

Story Highlights

City officials and residents of East Chicago are outraged at a flawed CDC lead report that has put children at risk.

The CDC determined in 2011 that lead levels at the West Calumet Complex were safe based on false information.

At least 1,100 residents have been evacuated out of the 40-year-old public housing complex.

Residents of an East Chicago, Indiana, housing project are infuriated that they were not informed for a year and a half that the soil in their complex had extremely high levels of lead that were endangering their children.

In July, 1,100 residents of the West Calumet Complex in the industrial town were notified by the Environmental Protection Agency that not only were they and their children exposed to high levels of lead, but that their complex would be demolished because of the toxicity of the lead, according to CNN.

A press release by the EPA said involvement coordinators for the agency went door-to-door, warning residents not to allow children to play in the dirt and provided information on ways to reduce exposure to possible lead in the soil.

In this Aug. 23, 2016 photo, a sign from the Environmental Protection Agency is posted in front of West Calumet Housing Complex houses at East Chicago, Indiana. The EPA has detected high levels of lead in samples of dust and dirt tracked inside homes where soil is tainted with industrial contaminants. The contamination has resulted in the city calling for the demolition of the low-income complex and relocating its 1,000 residents. (AP Photo/Tae-Gyun Kim)
West Calumet resident Shantel Allen, 28, learned that parts of her yard had lead levels up to 66 times above the lead limit and 55 times above the arsenic limit set by the EPA, according to CNN.

She was even more shocked when she learned that her "property was tested for lead and arsenic at the end of 2014" but only learned about the results in July.

"I was pregnant while in this complex — exposed to lead, sleeping on a contaminated bed, laying on a contaminated couch — nobody said anything. They kept this very well hidden from all of us," Allen told CNN.

All five of her children were found to have high levels in their blood, including her 2-year-old daughter, Samira, who tested positive for lead poisoning with a level of 33 micrograms per deciliter, nearly seven times the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's recommended threshold.

"They show all the signs and symptoms of having lead poisoning. They have fevers, chills; they vomit. ... I've taken them to the emergency room a number of times," Allen said.

Flawed CDC Report

Five years ago, a branch of the CDC, the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry, or ATSDR, which "conducts public health assessments to examine potential contamination risks and points the way to next steps to be taken by EPA and others," issued a 19-page report that "all but ruled out the possibility of children here getting lead poisoning," according to a report by Reuters.

The July 2011 report said "breathing the air, drinking tap water or playing in soil in neighborhoods near the USS Lead Site is not expected to harm people's health."

In this Aug. 30, 2016 file photo, Shantel Allen, right, a resident of the West Calumet Housing Complex reacts with her husband, Charles during a news conference in Munster, Indiana. (AP Photo/Tae-Gyun Kim, File)

Reuters found that they were basing their conclusions, in part, on the assumption that nearly "100 percent" of the children in the area were being tested and that the health data collected indicated that the incidences of lead poisoning had decreased in recent years. However, Reuters discovered that state data showed that the annual rate of "blood lead testing among children in East Chicago ranged from 5 percent to 20 percent over the last 11 years."

Not only did the report give residents a false sense of security in an area known for high levels of lead, it gave the EPA the same sense of security. According to EPA Region Five Administrator Robert Kaplan, the ATSDR report's findings led to the EPA's decision not to conduct more soil testing because they believed residents weren't in any imminent risk. Instead, the EPA "focused on a multi-year plan to gradually test for and replace the lead-tainted soil," according to Reuters.

City Officials Respond

East Chicago Mayor Anthony Copeland accused the EPA in July of "breaking the city's trust by withholding data about the levels of lead and arsenic contamination found in the soil in the Calumet

neighborhood and failing to provide adequate data for the 2011 health assessment that wrongly concluded children's health was not at risk," according to the Northwest Indiana Times.

In this Aug. 3, 2016 file photo, Joseph Russell, 2, rides his tricycle outside his home at the West Calumet Housing Complex in East Chicago, Indiana. The mayor of this industrial town ordered the evacuation of the 40-year-old public housing complex this summer because of severe lead contamination, forcing more than 1,000 people from their homes. (Jonathan Miano/The Times via AP, file)

The mayor ordered the evacuation of residents at the 40-year-old public housing complex in July, saying the level of lead found was too dangerous for the more than 600 children living at the complex, according to Reuters.

In July, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development allocated \$1.9 million to help permanently relocate residents. The state has also released another 100,000 to help residents with moving expenses, the Northwest Indiana Times also reported.

East Chicago City Attorney Carla Morgan said on Aug. 30 that more than half of the families living in the complex who were told to relocate by Nov. 30 received HUD vouchers that became effective Sept. 1.

Allen told Reuters she and her family will be moving to Nevada next month, but the HUD voucher will not cover all of the moving expenses.

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/thousands-of-indiana-residents-endangered-by-incorrect-lead-report_us_57ebbdd0e4b024a52d2b995d

Thousands Of Indiana Residents Endangered By Misleading Lead Report
